White slaves, Black slave owners in America

Robert M. Grooms, in "The Johnson Family: African-American Owners of White and Black Slaves", has revealed the fact that Blacks owned White slaves in America. He also notes that a legal precedent for life-long slavery in America was established by a Black slave owner with regard to one of his Black slaves.

> *"On April 10, 1606 the Virginia Company of London was granted a royal charter by King James I, awarding it a large tract of land in present day Virginia, Delaware and Maryland.*
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> *On May 13, 1607 three small ships, Susan Constant, Godspeed and Discovery, arrived at Cape Henry, sailed up the James River, and landed at present-day Jamestown ("James Towne"). Following a 131-day voyage crowded in damp, cold, foul smelling holds in the darkness beneath the decks, 104 settlers, including twelve servants, disembarked and established a rough log fortress.*
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> *...In August 1619, more than a year before the landing of the ship Mayflower, a captured Dutch man-of-war, with a Spanish captain name Jope and an English pilot named Marmaduke, anchored in the James River near Jamestown. On board were "20 and odd" men and women of African descent. The Virginia colony was in need of laborers, while the captain and his crew were in need of supplies. A bargain was struck and twenty Negroes, the first of their race in the colonies, were sold to the colonists, fresh food and water was brought aboard, and the ship sailed away.*
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> *...According to the African-American Chairman of President William Clinton's Commission on Race, Duke University professor John Hope Franklin:*
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> *These newcomers, who happened to be black, were simply more indentured servants. They were listed in the census counts of 1623 and 1624; and as late as 1651, Negroes whose period of service had expired were also being assigned land much the same way that it was being assigned to whites who had completed their indenture. During the first-half century of existence Virginia had many Negroes as servants; and the record reveals an increasing numbers of free Negroes.*
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> *Franklin wrongly designated the first twenty Negroes in the colonies as indentured servants, instead of redemptioners. Indentured servants, in return for paying the cost of their passage to the New World, entered into a written contract while still in Europe to work for a specified owner, for a specified number of years, under determined conditions*
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> *...The length of the bound servitude, be it an extendable set number of years or durante vite (servitude for life) has no bearing on whether an individual is deemed a slave. The vast majority of whites and all blacks arrived in the colonies as redemptioners. They were generally of the underclass, including orphans, who were rounded up (often involuntarily) while still in their native country and transported to the New World. Whites were frequently transported in the same ships that were used for Africans.*
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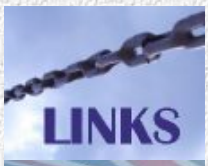
> *One redemptioner who came to American in 1750 recalled his trip with horror: "To keep from starving, we had to eat rats and mice. We paid from eight pence to two shilling for a mouse,*



Australian Identity Internet Forum

Destiny magazine

Australian Nationalist Resource

The Association for the Advancement of Australian Culture
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European People's Anti-Defamation Organisation

The British National Party
American Renaissance

four pence for a quart of water."

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Gittlieb Mittelburger in, Journey to Pennsylvania, recorded in 1750 that: The sale of human beings at the market on board the ship is carried on thus: ...Every day Englishmen, Dutchmen, and High German people come from the city of Philadelphia and other places in part from a great distance, say twenty, thirty, or forty hours away, and go on board the newly-arrived ship that has brought and offers for sale passengers from Europe, and select among the healthy persons such as they deem suitable for their business

...White and black servants joined the same households - working, eating, sleeping and running away together. Their terms of service could be extended for a large number of minor offenses, including marrying or having children without permission. As a result of extensions, many white redemptioners served their whole life as a "servant."

...A child born to a female redemptioner could become the property of her owner and the mother's term extended. For example, George Cummins had the indenture of his white servant woman named Christian Finney extended by a year and her child bound for thirty-one years by order of the Carteret County Count on December 7, 1736. When she applied to the court for her freedom on June 9, 1744, the court ruled that she serve another five months to pay for the cost incurred by her owner to bring the earlier action. When she applied again 6 months later, she was ordered to serve an additional year for having a "Mulatto Child in the time of her servitude."

Before 1643 servants without indentures generally became freemen after a term of service varying from two to eight years. After 1643, the terms of servants "brought into the colony without indentures or covenants to testify to their agreement" were fixed at four to seven years, the period varying somewhat with the age of the servant. It was the custom and later the law that a redemptioner, white or black, received from his master at the time of his discharge a certain amount of property called "freedom dues." In 1660 Virginia custom was to give each new freeman "3 barrels of corn and suit of clothes."

...In1651 Anthony Johnson [a negro] was given 250 acres as "head rights" for purchasing five incoming white redemptioners.

...In 1652 John Johnson, Anthony Johnson's eldest son, purchased eleven incoming white males and females, and received 550 acres adjacent to his father.

...There were a number of additional Virginia land patents representing grants to free blacks of from fifty to 550 acres for purchasing white redemptioners. For example, on April 18, 1667 Emanuel Cabew received fifty acres in James City County, and in 1668 fifty acres were deed to John Harris of Queen's Creek. Francis Payne paid for his freedom in 1650 by purchasing three incoming whites for his master's use.

The First Black Slave for Life.

In addition to owning white redemptioners, Anthony and Mary Johnson also owned black servants. In the 1640's John Casor was brought to the Virginia Colony, where he was purchased by Anthony Johnson. In 1653 Casor filed a complaint in Virginia's Northamption County Court, claiming that his master had unjustly extended the term of his servitude with the intent of keeping Casor his servant for life. In his formal written pleading Casor alleged: "Yt hee come unto Virginia for seaven or eight years of Indenture, yt he had demanded his freedom of Anth. Johnson his masfter; & further sd yt hee had kept him his servt seaven years longer than he should or ought." [Original spelling.] Johnson, insisting he knew nothing of an indenture, fought hard to retain what he regarded as his personal property, stating, "hee had ye Negro for his life." On March 5, 1655 the presiding judge, Captain Samuel Goldsmith, ruled that "the said Jno Caster Negro shall forthwith bee returned to the service of his master Anthony Johnson." Casor went with the Johnson's to Maryland and was still owned by Mary Johnson in 1672.

Durante vite (servitude for life) had not existed in the colonies - except for a small number of white convicts transported from the British Isles - until Anthony and Mary Johnson won the judicial determination making John Castor their servant for life. It was not until 1670 that the Virginia legislature enacted durante vite by providing that "all servants not being Christians imported into this colony by shipping are to be slaves for their lives, but such servants as come are to serve, if boys or girls, until 30 years of age, if men or women, 12 years and no longer."

Blacks and Indians came to own, and abuse, whites in Virginia in such large numbers that in 1670 the House of Burgesses (legislature) proclaimed that " . . . noe negro or Indian though baptyised and enjoyned their own ffreedome shall be capable of any purchase of christians, but yet not debarred from buying any of their own nation." [Original spelling.] "Christian" was a euphemism of the period for Caucasian. Virginia's Slave Code of 1705 provided: "That no negroes, mulattos, Indians, although christians, ore Jew, Moore, Mahometans, or other infidels, shall at any time,

purchase any Christian, nor any other, except of their own complexion, or such as are declared slaves by this act." " [73]

This aspect of slave history seems to have "slipped by" the media and academia without being noticed.